ANNUAL REPORT

of

SITKA MISSION HOSPITAL

by

B. K. WILBUR, M. D.

1896.

REPORT.

IN submitting this report of the work accomplished at this station, by the Sitka Mission Hospital, we desire to express our very sincere gratitude to the many friends who have generously aided us, and it is with real pleasure that we are able to present a substantial gain in all the departments.

The hospital has now completed its second year under the present management, and since its remodelling. The past year has been characterized by growth in all directions, as we trust the following facts and figures will demonstrate.

REPAIRS AND IMPROVEMENTS

The hospital has been much improved by the building of closets in each ward and operating room; the erecting of a stairway to the large attic where two comfortable rooms have been built for the girls in training, thus obviating the necessity of their sleeping in the wards. A new store room, for groceries, has been fitted up and an adjoining out-building has been arranged for a mortuary. This last is of the greatest importance as it has previously been most inconvenient and unwise to keep bodies within the house until burial.

FINANCIAL

Three hundred and sixty odd dollars were received from all sources but principally from in-patients and for doctor's fees. This has been applied toward the running expenses of the hospital.

NURSES AND ASSISTANTS

There are, at present, four young women in the house who act as assistants to the head nurse, Miss Esther Gibson, and who are given such instruction in the care of the sick as they are able to receive. Systematic effort is made to train them as far as possible, but of course, the lack of necessary collateral education makes the education of trained nurses, in the usual sense of the word, impossible.

SUMMER CLOSING

The house was closed for six weeks in mid-summer, for the above repairs, painting, disinfection, etc.

RELIGIOUS WORK

Through the greater part of the year Rev. Mr. Austin, pastor to the Mission, has held weekly services in the wards. Short services are held every evening in each ward and the Sabbath school lesson is taught in each ward on Sunday, by Miss Gibson. Morning prayers are held with the nurses.

EPIDEMICS

Two epidemics have occurred; one of Rotheln (German measles) and one of epidemic influenza. These have had something to do in producing the unusual increase over last year as most of the cases were from the children of the training school.

DEATHS

Of the five deaths occurring four were from tuberculosis pulmomalis (consumption) and one from surgical shock.

While the majority of the cases treated outside of the school are from the native village at Sitka, yet we have also received patients from Wrangel, Metlakahtla, Chilkat and Juneau.

The following cases have received treatment:

Abscess—		Haemoptosis (Khlingit)	2
foot	1	Influenza, epidemic	11
hand	2	Keratosis	4
hip	1	Laryngitis	9
mastoid	1	Lacerated perineum	2
Arthritis	3	Lumbago	2

Bronchitis	4	Megraim, chronic	8
Burns of chest and face	1	Mitral disease	2
Contusion—		Myalgia	2
chest	1	Necrosis of oscalcis	1
eye	1	Otalgia	1
pelvis	1	Pleurodynia	12
Conjunctivitis	15	Pneumonia	3
Corrhyza, acute	8	Potts disease	2
Dislocation—		Rotheln	23
of shoulder	2	Tonsilitis	16
Dysentary	1	Torticollos	1
Dysmenorrhoea	1	Tuberculosis—	
Enteritis	5	cervival glands	3
Endometritis	5	lungs	14
Erysipelas	2	hip	2
Fracture—		knee	1
of clavical	1	messentery	1
of metacarpal	1	Stricture urethrae	2
of tibia and fibula	1	Syphilis	3
Gastritis	2	Urethritis	1
Gun shot wound of finger	1	Uterine tumor, fibroma	1
		Uterine displacement	1

RECAPITULATION

	1896	1895
Number of patients treated	191	86
" different persons treated	188	69
" days board given	2759	1227
Average number of days each patient received treatment	14.4	14.3
Percentage of deaths	2	8
" unimproved	1	9
" improved	12	35
" cured	85	52
Number of beds maintained	22	21
" operations	93	50

"	out patients treated in doctor's office	1153	1000
"	school children treated	79	51
"	protestant natives	29	17
"	Russo-Greek natives	7	5
"	whites	3	1

We take great pleasure in acknowledging the following donations: Mrs. Louise Houghton, New York, instruments to the value of $100. H. M. S. "Pheasant," cash, $30. Mrs. A. B. Kingsland, Titusville, Pa., 3 doz. pairs felt slippers. Presbyterian church, Sitka, $11.40. Mrs. J. G. Brady and Mrs. G. P. Knapp, Sitka, cash $5. Mrs. E. C. Heizer, Sitka, two rocking chairs, $7. Mrs. H. O. Wilbur, Bryn Mawr, Pa., house furnishings, $12; fruits, jellies, crackers, etc., $10. B. M. Behrends, Juneau, Alaska, 30 feet rubber tubing. Mrs. Northrop, Sitka, instrument, $2.50. B. K. Wilbur, M. D., Sitka, instruments, books and furnishings, $20.

We also desire to gratefully acknowledge: From Miss Allie B. Gill, Secty., Columbus, Ohio, one box rubber sheeting, water bags, towels, cotton, etc. From the Y. P. S. C. E. of California; two boxes and a bale of clothing, sheets, etc., box of books and games. From Mrs. E. S. Prentice, Tacoma, Washington, one box aprons and clothing.

This hospital, founded by Mrs. Elliott F. Sheppard, is maintained by the Board of Home Missions of the Presbyterian church, in connection with the Sitka Industrial Training School. Donations of money for the hospital should be sent to Mrs. S. F. Lincoln, 156 Fifth Ave., New York City.

All of which is respectfully submitted,

B. K. WILBUR, M. D.

Third Annual Report

OF THE

Sitka Mission Hospital,

BY

BERTRAND K. WILBUR, M.D.
Physician in charge.

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REPORT.

IN submitting this report of the Medical work of the Sitka Mission Hospital for the third year under the present management, to those who have kindly aided us and to those of whose constant interest and sympathy we have been assured, we desire to offer a brief history of the origin and growth of medical work among the Khlingets of Southeastern Alaska, and especially call attention to certain new features of our work which are pointed out in the following pages. While this report is for the year ending November 22, 1897, it should be borne in mind that for three months and a half of this time the physician was on furlough in the East and while the work went on under the care of the nurse, Miss Esther Gibson, with the assistance of the Naval Surgeons stationed at this place, there was necessarily a falling off of the operations and out-patient work.

History of the Work.—In 1889 it became evident that a place was needed to care for the sick of the school other than the dormitories, and through the kindness of Mrs. Elliott F. Shepard of New York, money was donated to this special object. A Girls' Hospital was built and later one for boys near by. In 1893 it was deemed unwise to attempt to carry on two separate establishments, though the reasons for this seemed urgent at first; hence the Boys' Hospital was somewhat enlarged and the upper floor devoted to a ward for girls, the former Girls' Hospital being used for teachers' quarters and later a parsonage.

The combined house was opened for patients November 22, 1894, when the physician, followed by the nurse and her two native assistants, carried the first patient from the school to her little bed in the new ward. Previous to 1894 the building had been open to patients from the school only, but now, with increased facilities, the wards were opened to natives from any part of Alaska, either at a nominal fee, or, in cases of destitution, as free patients.

Repairs and Improvements.—During the year past, the policy of making such improvements in the hospital grounds as was possible, has been carried out and considerable grading and stumping has been done. The roof of the porch on the east side has been extended, adding much to the convenience of the kitchen; walks have been built and minor improvements made. The whole house has been painted outside and the whole building kept in excellent repair.

Nurses.—Fortunately no change has been made in the nursing corps during the past year. The four native girls who have been in the institution nearly two years, have made good progress considering the fact that only a moderate school education has seriously crippled their ability to grasp the technical facts necessary to their profession. For their faithfulness and willingness to do the most trying tasks, too much praise cannot be given. They are all Christian girls and the real effort to serve Christ is manifest in their daily lives. As far as possible theoretical and practical instruction has been given them, in which they have shown much interest.. Seventy-six lectures and demonstrations have been given the past year.

Religious Work.—It has ever been the aim of this institution to reach the spiritual side of the patients. Evening prayers are held with all patients, except those occupying the private room. Brief services are maintained each morning with the nurses. The Sabbath School lesson is taught each week, by Miss Gibson, in the wards. The pastor has visited the wards from time to time as occasion offered.

Out-Patients, Fees, &c.—Our first practice in and out of the hospital was to render all service gratuitously, but a better understanding of the facts of this field and the condition of the people, has made us and others with whom we have consulted, feel sure that a wiser policy was to charge a nominal fee for all services where there was not actual poverty. Actual poverty among the Sitkas is very rare. About two years ago this policy was adopted and seemed to be understood by the people. But as they were becoming accustomed to paying for the services of the physician, a Russian priest was sent to Sitka, who at once began to treat them without charge. The priest himself claims only a very limited knowledge of medicine, yet has succeeded in reducing our out-patient work considerably. This is not strange, as a glance at the dispensaries of any of the great city hospitals will quickly reveal what an attraction free medical treatment is, even to those whose advantages have been so greatly in advance of our people here. Yet we have adhered to the practice of nominal charges, because the people will take their medicine more faithfully and take better care of it when they pay for it; they will not impose on the doctor for slight or imaginary ills, for they seem unaccountably fond of taking medicine, at best; they are led to appreciate the service rendered them; to more highly value remedies, and are not pauperized by the continual dependence upon charity. This is no longer a pioneer mission field. Free treatment accomplishes nothing in overcoming prejudice or in bringing those who know not the Gospel Message under its influence; for we hardly find any who have not known or heard of Christ. On the other hand, free in-patients are the hardest to please and the least satisfied with the most conscientious service.

We do believe that the hospital offers opportunities of touching people offered by nothing else, and it has been truly beautiful to see the effect of kindness and gentle Christianity on those who have been in our wards. Again and again have we realized that it is "not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord."

Obstacles.—The past year has seen more resistance to our work from Greco-Russian sources, than any other since we entered this field.

While no overt act has been committed, there has been a constant effort to undermine our influence. False statements as to the results and methods of our work have been freely circulated in the native village, and as the people are chronic gossips they have gained considerable force, and wrought some harm. As for example : a patient trephined in the hospital over a year ago, died last summer from causes entirely foreign to the operation, as the naval surgeon who saw her testified. The Russians, however, made great capital of this, pointing out that it was because the girl had been operated on in the "heretic hospital" that she died. Of course the money question referred to previously has been our most serious obstacle.

Still we are glad to present the following summary of the year's work :—

	1897	*1896*
Number of patients treated	206	191
" different persons treated	113	105
Aggregate days patients in hospital	2594	2759
Average days each patient in hospital	12.5	14.4
Number of prescriptions to in-patients	2634	Not recorded.
Percentage of deaths	3	2
" unimproved	2	1
" improved	12	12
" cured	83	85
Number of beds maintained	21	21
" out-patients treated in doctor's office,	1119	1153
" school children treated	80	71
" Greeko-Russian natives treated	17	7
" Protestant natives treated	14	24
" whites	2	3
" operations performed	38	93
Causes of death—Tuberculosis	3	
" " Capillary Bronchitis	3	

Total number of prescriptions made since June 1894, 10,581.

RECAPITULATION BY DISEASES.

Abscess—Chin	1	Fracture—Fibula	1
Foot	1	Tibia and fibula	1
Hand	1	Gastritis	1
Mammary	1	Hæmoptisis, Khlinget	1
Accouchement	1	Laryngitis	4
Arthritis	3	Lumbago	2
Blepharitis marg.	1	Measles	53
Bronchitis	16	Megraim, chronic	1
Broncho-pneumonia	1	Myalgia	5
Capillary bronchitis	5	Paraplegia	1
Cataract	1	Pertussis	8
Cephalalgia	7	Pericarditis	1
Conjunctivitis	3	Pleuralgia	8
" phlyct.	5	Potts' disease	3
Contusion, eye	1	Tonsilitis	38
Corrhyza, acute	2	Tuberculosis—Glands	8
Dislocation, radius	2	Lungs	8
Dysmenorrhœa	1	Knee	1
Enteritis	4	Ulcer, indolent	1
Endometritis	2	Wounds, infected—Thumb	2
Erysipelas	1	Toe	1
Fracture—Rib	1	Wounds, incised—Thumb	1

Epidemics.—Two epidemics were reported last year and no return of these diseases has been observed this year. Instead, Measles and Pertussis have been epidemic, the former being of a mild type. The rapid influx of people to the gold fields seems to indicate a rapid increase of the epidemic diseases, which have, in the past, been of rare occurrence. As the condition of the native villages all over S. E. Alaska is extremely unsanitary and the methods of life are generally filthy, a most favorable ground is presented for the development of all disease germs, and epidemics usually spread with the greatest rapidity.

Remarks.—From the above figures it will be noticed that the range of disease met with here is comparatively limited. Chest troubles and especially tuberculosis is most common, while syphilis is almost if not quite as frequent. These latter cases, however, apply only spasmodi-

cally to the hospital for treatment, and as soon as relieved will drift away—it is not possible to hold them for a sufficient time to effect a cure. A marked falling off in operations is noticed, though we are unable to explain the cause, as there has been no surgical deaths during the year, nor any particular reason why the natives, generally so ready to submit to surgery, should have avoided it.

Financial.—The hospital is not self-supporting. About three hundred and odd dollars have been received as fees and donations for maintenance; the expenses above this amount are met by the Woman's Board of Home Missions of the Presbyterian Church, 156 Fifth Avenue, New York, to whom all donations of money should be addressed. The hospital is now open to a limited number of white patients, a private room being fitted up for their use.

It is with very sincere gratitude that we acknowledge the following donations received during the past year:—

From Miss Allie B. Gill, Secretary, a splendid box containing nurses' aprons, operating aprons, chambray for nurses' uniforms, pillows, bleached muslin and bed spreads.

From a C. E. Society of Brooklyn, N.Y., table covers and bandages.

The C. E. Societies of San Jose, Los Gatos and Santa Clara, several barrels of dried fruit.

Governor Brady, Alaska, cash $5.00; Mrs. Brady, cash $5.00.

Mrs. H. O. Wilbur, Philadelphia, fruit, &c. to the value of $10.00.

Dr. W. B. VanLennep, Philadelphia, 1 White's Physiological Mannikin; B. K. Wilbur, cash $5.00; 1 stove.

Dr. A. R. Alfred, U.S.N., medical service.

W. C. Crose, U.S.N., 1 stove, 1 canvas cradle, medicine glasses.

Mr. A. Carty, one week's work—grading.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

B. K. WILBUR, M.D.

WM. A. KELLY,
Superintendent of Mission.